412 (*eché*), hoe (*asrón*), machete (*machit*), coa (*luk*), and digging stick (*avutel*). In a 243 few towns (Amatenango), where lands are [409] flat, the plow is made of wood and pulled by oxen but only for wheat farming. During [415] corn planting, the seed is carried by the planter in a *morral* hung from the shoulder, [824] in a gourd with a large spout, or in con- [237] tainers made of armadillo shells. The harvested crops are placed in deep baskets, made of reed-grass, or in big pita (*chojak*) [412] net bags. The ear of corn is cleared of its [237] husk by a sharp bone or a small deer horn.

322 The axe, machete, and knife are used in 412 wood working, which is very rudimentary, though handsaw and hammer have a place. With these tools the Indians make doors, tables, seats, small benches, shelves. Blom [534] and LaFarge (1926–27, 2:351) add that the Tzeltal near Ocosingo also make violins of a shape similar to the European type, but they have no resonance and poor tone. They also manufacture pipes and combs roughly [463] finished. No village of this group has specialists in carpentry to compare with the Chamulas (Tzotzil-speaking), who supply furniture at low cost to San Cristobal de las Casas and other places of the area.

324 Stone carving requires a pickaxe with 412 one end very sharp, the other very flat to serve as a hammer, and a short wooden handle. This is the tool used in Tenejapa for making metates. These metates have three legs, but Blom and LaFarge (1926–27, 2:338) mention metates without legs (Ocosingo municipio) which are made of volcanic stone found along the San Martin River. According to the Tzeltal of Oxchuc, the name of the metate is *chá*, its handle *kab-chá*.

412 An iron bar to break the ground, an axe, and a machete are the tools for building huts, chickencoops, sweat houses, and other small structures.

283 Another tool, used in the making of pita 413 rope, is *karet*, which probably comes from the Spanish *carreta*. It consists of a wooden disc fixed to a tree trunk that is nailed to

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4: Villa Rojas E-4, 5 (1938-1944) 1969
NV9 Tzeltal NV9

283 413 the ground. This disc has two hooks to which the fiber is knotted; when the disc is turned by a crank, it braids the fibers into rope. A thick board, smoothed by a metal knife (manufactured by the Indians from iron pieces bought in the city), is used to scrape the pita and remove the fiber.

407 [177] The most complex machine that the Tzeltal own and build is the wooden cane press, which was imported by the Spaniards to grind sugarcane (fig. 6). This machine is operated by two men, who move the rollers by a handle (*kabal-té*) at each end of the [415] machine. The juice pressed out by the rollers drops into fluted containers made of pieces 293 of banana tree, and finally into a pot. This juice is used in the preparation of an alcoholic beverage, *chicha* (*chi-ja*, 'sweet water'), and for panela. Chicha is prepared by [415] fermenting this juice by bran, corn, or wheat, in a special container (*canoja*) made from a fluted tree trunk. The bran or other fermenting agent is *smé-chi-já* ('mother of [184] the chicha'). Some communities (Tenejapa, Cancuc, Oxchuc) have greater preference for this beverage than other Tzeltal groups.

224 411 [412] A gun has become very common in hunting. Sometimes (Oxchuc and Tenejapa) rabbits are taken by striking them with a coa, after cornering them with the aid of dogs. Blom and LaFarge (1926–27, 2:352) state that the Tzeltal of the lowlands usually hunt wild boar with long wooden spears with fire-hardened or metal points. Traps protect the milpa as well as snaring game.

41 Cooking utensils are mainly indigenous. The usual set consists of clay containers of varying size and shape, jícaras, baskets, wooden spoons, a comal, a metate, hooks, and wooden tripods for hanging items over 177 the fire. In the last few years metal pots, 404 dishes, frying pans, boiling pans, and espe- 415 cially handy *nixtamal* mills (which are gradually displacing the grinding stone) 177 have been introduced. Other items that 207 come from the city are flashlights, small 405 kerosene lamps, watches, scissors, and (in- 412 frequently) battery radios. 416

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